

Post-10/7 Jew Hatred in Carmel Clay Public Schools, Carmel, Indiana



Jewish Affairs Committee of Indiana

www.jaaci.org

March 2025

JAACI is a statewide Jewish & Israel advocacy group whose values are rooted in the Torah and the US Constitution

INTRODUCTION

Jew hatred is by far the most common type of religious hatred in the US. According to FBI statistics, in 2024 anti-Jewish hate crimes accounted for nearly 59% of all religious hate crimes in the US despite Jews comprising less than 2% of the total population.¹ The rate of Antisemitic incidents has greatly accelerated since October 7th, 2023, since the Hamas/Gazan invasion of Israel—which led to the greatest slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust—fueled the confidence and aggressiveness of Antisemites throughout the US, especially on college campuses. The targets of Antisemites are Jews on the individual and national (i.e. Jewish state of Israel) levels.

While Jew hatred is most acutely observed in higher education, primary and secondary educational systems have been affected as well. Carmel, Indiana, is an affluent and upscale city on the outskirts of Indianapolis that is frequently listed as one of America's top cities. Carmel's educational system is one of the best in Indiana and considered one its most attractive attributes. Yet Jews in the Carmel Clay School system have been increasingly troubled by a series of Antisemitic incidents that have increased in frequency since 10/7.

This report was written to document incidents of Jew hatred occurring in Carmel Clay schools since 10/7 in the hope that it will lead to systemic accountability and zero tolerance for Jew hatred. Note that this report may have missed Antisemitic events that were not brought to the attention of the authors. A summary analysis and recommendations are described at the end of the report.

¹<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>

ANTISEMITISM AFTER 10/7

October 2023- Carmel High School

Incident: An antisemitic flyer entitled “Free Palestine-73 years of occupation” was observed in a school classroom. After a Jewish student brought it to the attention of a teacher it was removed.



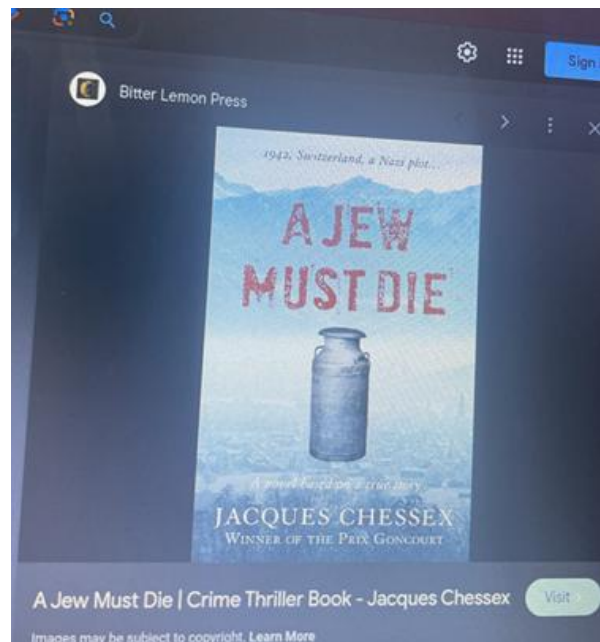
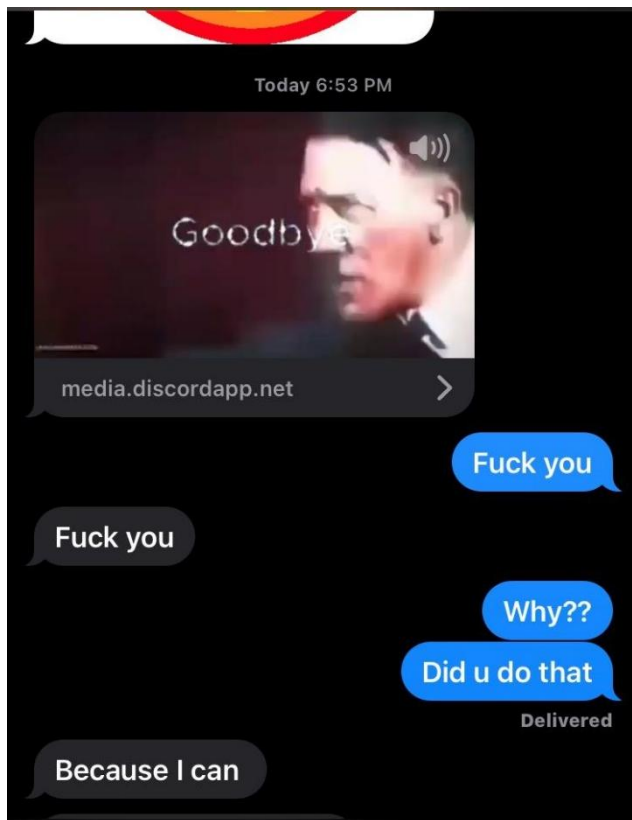
March 15, 2024- Carmel High School

Incident: The CHS Palestine Solidarity Committee Student Club made the paintings shown below. The PSC club describes itself in the following way: “The Palestinian Solidarity Committee at Carmel is going to be a student organization dedicated to recognizing and raising awareness about the Palestinian people through learning about their culture. This will be done through trying famous Palestinian dishes, traditional clothing, dances, and more! This is a place for everyone, regardless of background, to come together and try new cultures as well as a place for the minority of Palestinian students to feel a space for unity and support.” Rather than adhere to the club description, the paintings reflect a publicly aggressive religious-political stance that advocates for the complete eradication of the Jewish State of Israel and its replacement by an Arab Muslim state. Photos of the paintings were later posted on the PSC club’s Instagram account. The role the faculty advisor played in these actions is not known.



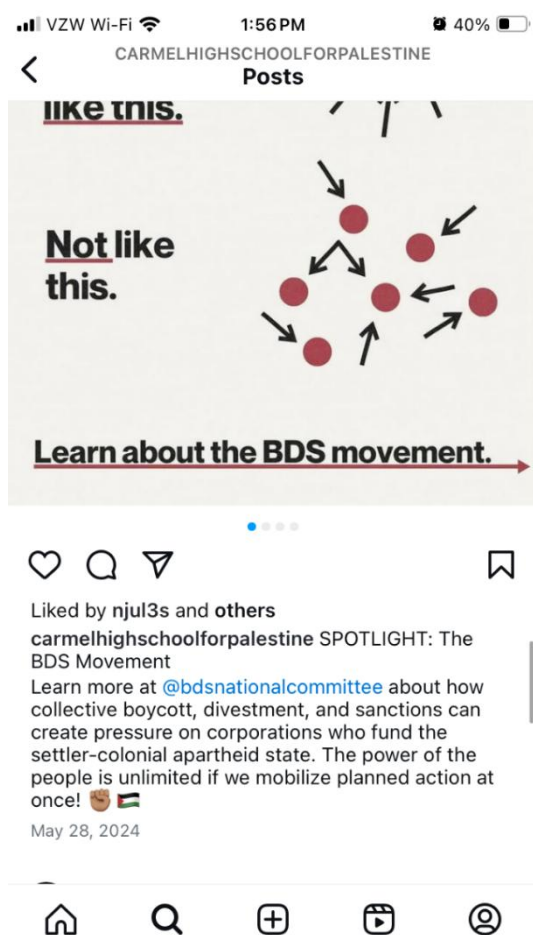
March 2024 to May 2025- Carmel Middle School

Incident: In March 2024 a Jewish student was taunted with “Seig Heils” from a fellow student who also sent him a video and other texts of a threatening and Antisemitic nature that invoked Adolph Hitler (below). Of note, the video was apparently being circulated by other students in the school. The school organized meetings with the families of both students. A mediation plan between the family and Vice Principal Mr. Perdun was agreed upon. However, on the last day of the school year the very same student played a Nazi march song on his computer in front of the class. The teacher told him to close the computer which the student did but he then sang the song in the Jewish student’s face. Mr. Perdun called the family of the Jewish student and told them he would take care of the issue. The family never received any follow-up information. In March 2025 a separate female student told the Jewish student that she wished his family would have died in a concentration camp. The Jewish student shared this experience with his teacher, who told the student that he would handle it but that he could not reveal any additional information.



May and November 2024- Carmel High School

Incident: Student groups Carmel High School for Palestine and Carmel High School Palestine Solidarity Committee both posted on Instagram support for the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement, a movement whose Antisemitic goal is to delegitimize, demonize, and ultimately destroy only one nation in the world-- the Jewish State of Israel. The PSC reportedly also called for boycotting “Zionist businesses” (post unavailable). In another Instagram post the CHS for Palestine group described the Jewish State of Israel in terms used by other radicalized organizations (i.e. “settler-colonial apartheid state”). It also includes in its Instagram heading the phrase “from the river to the sea Palestine will be free”, code for destruction of the Jewish State of Israel and its Jewish inhabitants. This radicalized language is reminiscent of what is frequently heard on so many of the US college campuses that are hostile to their Jewish students.



< **carmelhighschoolforpalestine** 🔔 ...



Carmel HS Students for Palestine
they/them/theirs

9
posts

100
followers

46
following

Cause

🇵🇸 carmel high school, ny — DM & GET INVOLVED!

🍉 educating to mobilize + organize students

🇵🇸 from the river to the sea, palestine will be free

[🔗 wolpalestine.com/encampments](https://wolpalestine.com/encampments)

Following ▾

Message



June 5, 2024: Carmel High School

Incident: Carmel High School for Palestine student club posts a statement arguing that the Hamas/Gazan invasion of the Jewish State of Israel and its subsequent rape, torture, mutilation, setting on fire, taking of hostages, and slaughter of innocent Jews - the worst attack on Jews since the Holocaust- was justified because of “resistance”.



October 25, 2024- West Clay Elementary School

Incident: At West Clay’s International Festival, the extra-sized booth/display provided for “Palestine” displayed a map (below) that erased the present Jewish State of Israel and replaced it with a fictional state of Palestine. This classic political and theological act of Jew hatred is designed to rewrite history and erase the Jewish presence from the historical homeland of the Jewish people. A picture of the “Al Aqsa” mosque on the wall (below) testifies to the religious-inspired nature of the booth sponsors. At the time the event occurred JAACI reached out to Superintendent Michael Beresford. In an email response Beresford stated that West Clay Principal Turner received a complaint about the map the previous year (though he offered no explanation why nothing was done about it even then!). He said Turner stated that they added new guidelines to festival materials going forward that prohibited current events and political references and provided parents with information about what should and could be included to display their heritage.



March 7, 2025, Smoky Row Elementary School

Incident: At Smoky Row's International Festival a booth used for "Palestine" included a shocking visual display that included the following statements/quotes:

- "Bani Israel (The Children of Israel) has always been a difficult nation"
- "The Jews spoke very ill of Mary and Issa"
- "The Jews plotted to crucify Issa [Jesus]"
- "Quiz time: Did the Jews kill (Issa)?"

(All these involve theological Islamic Jew hatred)

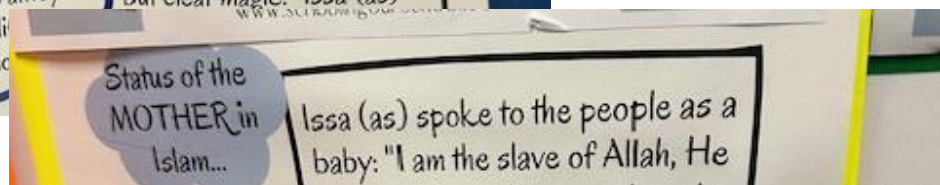
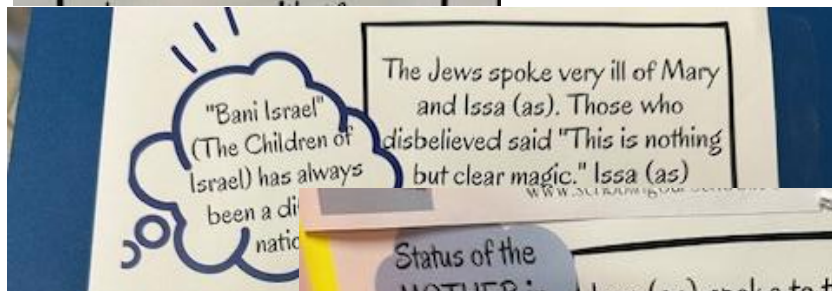
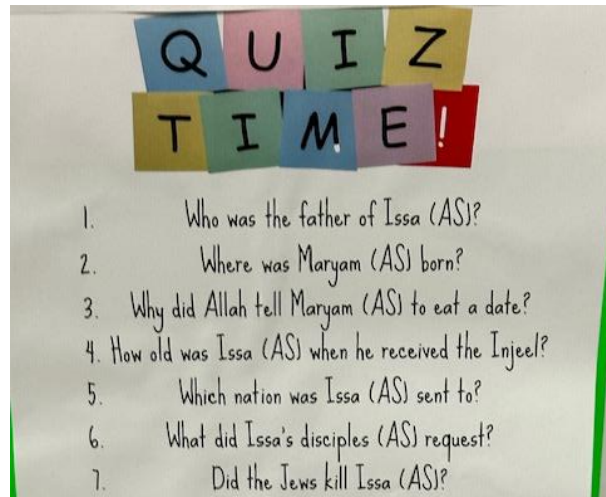
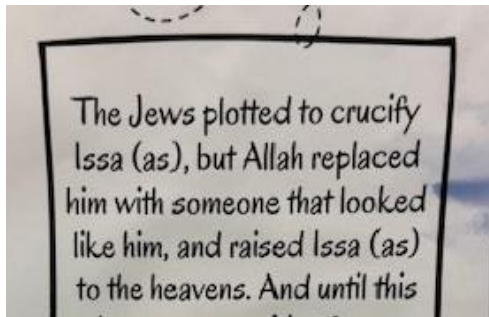
- "The importance of Jerusalem through the prophets...Sulaiman [Solomon]"
- (this involves Islamic replacement theology of Judaism)*

- "Issa (Jesus) said: I am the slave of Allah"

- describes a story that Allah replaced Issa (Jesus) with someone that looked like Issa [Jesus, but was not him] on the cross

(All these involve Islamic replacement theology of Christianity and anti-Christian beliefs)

Several Jewish parents became immediately concerned about the contents of the Palestine presentation. According to parents, Principal Lila Jay had 40 minutes prior to opening of the festival to review the displays to determine if they were appropriate. In the school bulletin published 2 days later, Principal Jay communicated no regrets or apologies about the display. Instead, she lauded the event, stating that we came "together for our International Festival which was wonderful."



Addendum to March 7, 2025, incident:

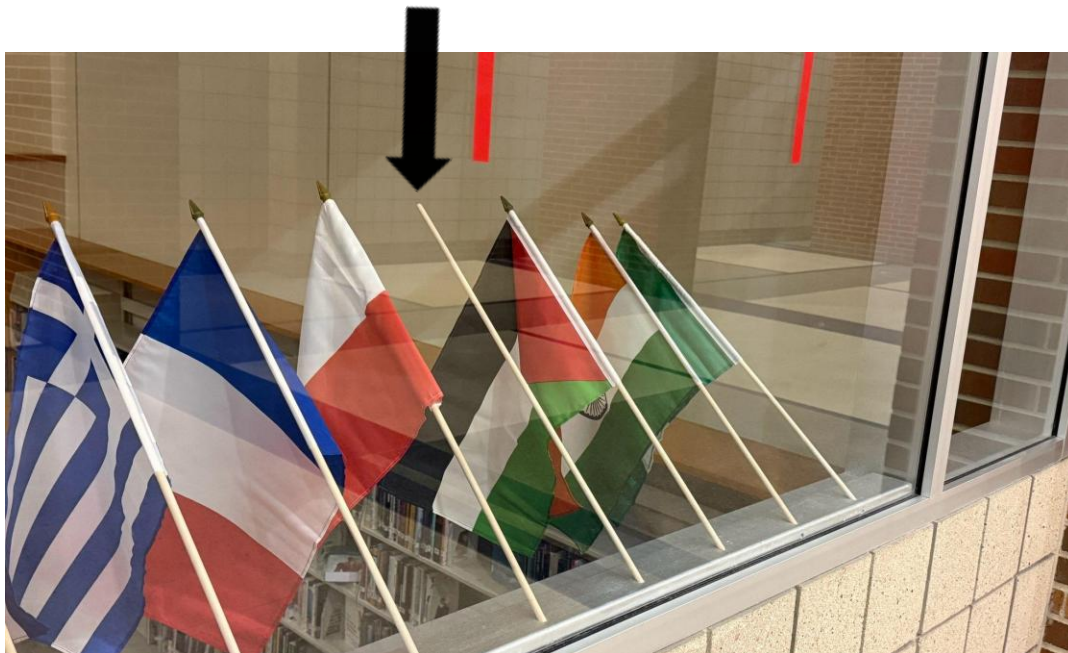
It turns out that the same Antisemitic display was presented at Smoky Row Elementary's International Festival the year before, and that Principal Lila Jay was seated in the Egypt booth which was immediately next to the Palestine booth (see social media photos immediately below).



March 2025- Carmel High School

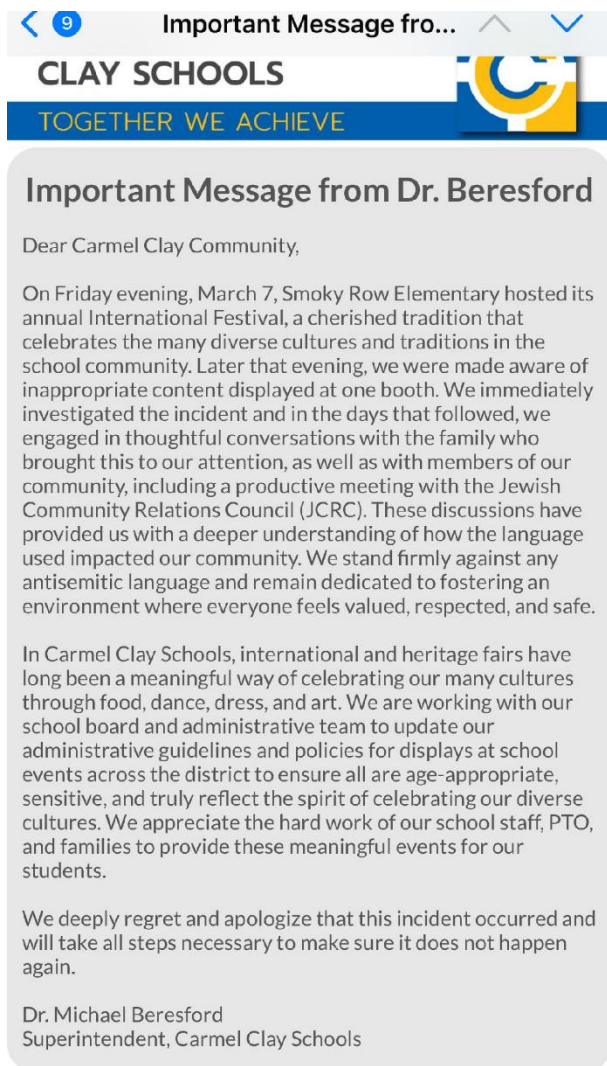
Incident: Flags of nations are flown around the high school library. For some reason the flag of “Palestine,” which is not a nation recognized by the US or the great majority of the world’s nations, has been flying next to the flag of the Jewish State of Israel. Over the weekend of March 15-16, students and parents observed that the flag of Israel had disappeared with the flagpole remaining (see below). According to library staff the flag did not appear to have fallen down. Therefore, the Israeli flag must have been deliberately removed.

Missing Israeli flag next to flag of “Palestine”



March 17, 2025- Response of CCS Superintendent and Smoky Row Elementary School

In response to the outcry after the Antisemitic (and anti-Christian) event that occurred on March 7, 2025, the following texts were released by Superintendent Beresford and Principal Jay:



Rocket Families,

At Smoky Row Elementary, we strive to be a place where we celebrate the rich cultures that make up our community. Our annual International Festival is one of our school's favorite traditions—an opportunity for families to come together to share and celebrate their heritage and culture.

This year, however, a display included language that caused harm, and we regret that anyone left feeling hurt or unwelcomed. Our goal is to always foster an environment where all families feel valued and respected.

We are working with district administration to put in place more precise guidelines and an approval process to ensure that all displays at Smoky Row and across the district align with the purpose of this event —bringing our community together in a student-focused, age-appropriate way.

We appreciate your partnership as we continue to grow and support our students and community.

Sincerely,

Lila Jay, Principal
Smoky Row Elementary

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

- The number of Antisemitic incidents within Carmel Clay School system has proliferated after 10/7, mimicking the pattern observed nationwide, as Antisemites become increasingly confident in their behavior.
- While the sources of Jew hatred within Carmel Clay schools are not entirely homogeneous, the overwhelming majority involve individual Arab Muslims and/or groups that represent Arab Muslim causes. This is consistent with survey data from the ADL and other sources identifying this as the most Antisemitic population in the US and worldwide.²
- The response of Carmel Clay school leadership, starting with Superintendent Beresford on down, has been weak, inconsistent, and ineffective, and has led to a collapse in confidence on the part of the Carmel Jewish community in the administration's ability to address Antisemitism.
- Imagine being a Jewish student or parent and having to deal with the recurrent incidents of Jew hatred documented in this report, at all levels of schooling, without an effective response from the school administration. This raises legitimate concerns about violations of civil rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Students and parents who promulgate Antisemitism must immediately be held accountable, as should school administrators who have failed to protect their Jewish students.
- A system-wide zero-tolerance policy for Jew hatred with penalties must immediately be instituted.
- State and/or federal officials should be invited in to help address and correct potential civil rights violations.
- Leadership must hold open forums with Carmel's Jewish parents and students in order to reestablish confidence in the school system, develop open and ongoing communication, and help steer an effective path forward that rids the schools of Antisemitism once and for all.

²<https://www.adl.org/adl-global-100-index-antisemitism>; Dencik et al. Different antisemitisms: Perceptions and experiences of antisemitism among Jews in Sweden and across Europe. (February 2017) Jewish Policy Research Institute, London.; [file:///C:/Users/allfried/Downloads/antisemitism-on-campus-082224-final%20\(3\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/allfried/Downloads/antisemitism-on-campus-082224-final%20(3).pdf); chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/Lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/arab-opinion-war-on-gaza-full-report-en.pdf